

Sovereignty isn't something you talk about, sovereignty is something you exercise. In order to exercise it you have to have the capacity.

That's the case, of course, in other fields. There might be people in the room here tonight who are interested in the CBC. You can't have the CBC unless you can pay for it.

There are certainly people in this room who are interested in the structure of social programs in Canada. You can't have a child care program unless you can pay for it.

There are certainly people in this room who are interested in maintaining the distinctive identity of this country. You can't maintain the distinctive identity of the country; you can't be sovereign; you can't be independent unless you have a strong economic base.

So that is one reason why this trade agreement will help us act more independently and more assertively in the world.

The other major reason is that nations assert their identity by reaching out in the world. By reaching out; and not by hiding out. Nobody ever became known by who they have hidden from. This country won't become known as an independent and strong nation because of the height of our wall, but we will be known by the distinctive nature of the contribution we have made internationally.

I am the Minister who has the responsibility in the final analysis, with the Prime Minister, of the foreign policy of this country. Let me just say that questions of the fears about our independence more often are raised in the context of foreign policy. Let me just draw your attention to some of the distinctive characteristics of this country, as expressed by this Government, in the field of foreign policy. In a field that is suppose to be threatened by our relations with the United States.

Look at what we are doing. See how distinctive, see how independent it is.